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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“Former County Care Facility Employee Charged with Theft, Fraud”

DES MOINES, Iowa – Patricia June Fletcher, 41, of Newton was charged Monday in Jasper County District Court with theft in the second degree and fraudulent practices in the second degree. The charges stem from alleged illegal transactions that occurred during the time period of September 1998 to September 2000. During this period Fletcher was employed as a qualified mental retardation professional at the Integrated Health Services (IHS) facility in Newton.

According to the trial information filed Monday, Fletcher misappropriated cash belonging to mentally retarded adults residing at the former health care facility and spent substantial amounts of cash from the residents’ trust accounts for the benefit of herself, her family, her household, and her pets. The amount of money involved is reportedly between \$1,000 and \$10,000. Additionally, Fletcher is charged with knowingly making false entries or alterations in the facility’s records to cover her illegal transactions. Jasper County operated the Newton facility, the former county care facility, until it closed in November 2000.

The investigation began after complaints were received and investigated by DIA’s Health Facilities Division and the department’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit. Assisting in the investigation were personnel from the Jasper County Sheriff’s, Auditor’s and Attorney’s offices. Prosecution will be handled by the Iowa Attorney General’s Office. Fletcher is scheduled to appear for arraignment in the Jasper County Courthouse on Wednesday, May 7, 2003.